

**Thursday, September 04, 2008**

**From the Coeur d'Alene Press**

- No education news stories posted online today.

**From the Spokesman-Review**

- No education news stories posted online today.

**From the Moscow Pullman Daily News (password required)**

- No education news stories posted online today.

**From the Lewiston Tribune (password required)**

- ID public schools budget could face opposition
- Lewiston, Clarkston students adjust to new class schedules

**From the Idaho-Press Tribune, Nampa**

- Dozen vie for CWI board
- Public schools chief requests \$1.5 billion
- Nampa school gets welcome grant

**From the Idaho Statesman**

- No education news stories posted online today.

**From the Twin Falls Times-News**

- ID public schools budget could face opposition

**From the Idaho State Journal (password required)**

- Schools budget sparks debate
- ISU loses nuclear engineers
- Luna submits \$1.5 billion school budget

**From the Idaho Falls Post Register (password required)**

- No education news stories posted online today.

FROM THE COEUR D'ALENE PRESS

**No education news stories posted online today.**

FROM THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

**No education news stories posted online today.**

FROM THE MOSCOW PULLMAN DAILY NEWS (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

**No education news stories posted online today.**

FROM THE LEWISTON TRIBUNE (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

**ID public schools budget could face opposition**

By JESSIE L. BONNER  
Associated Press Writer

BOISE, Idaho (AP) -- Public schools chief Tom Luna could be in for a fight after he earmarked a portion of his yearly budget proposal for a plan that will reward teachers based on their performance.

Luna submitted a proposed \$1.5 billion budget to the governor's office late Tuesday to operate and improve public schools in 2009 and 2010. The budget is to go before Idaho lawmakers in January and includes \$27 million for teacher raises and a pay-for-performance plan.

The proposed merit-based pay system is similar to a measure Idaho lawmakers voted to kill in February.

"I don't pretend to think that there's not going to be opposition," Luna said.

The public schools budget Luna proposed this week is about \$77 million more than the \$1.46 billion he requested in January 2008 to fund the current school year.

The new budget covers everything from teacher salaries and efforts to boost student test scores in reading, to classroom supplies and a program to let high school juniors and seniors earn college credits.

Most of the \$27 million for teacher raises is designated for an \$18 million pay-for-performance plan. Since at least the early 1980s, Republican lawmakers have sought to break up the existing compensation system, based on classroom experience, arguing that it rewards good teachers the same as the bad.

Earlier this year, however, the Legislature voted to dump a \$21 million version of Luna's pay-for-performance plan, in part because bonuses would have been based largely on how students perform on statewide tests. Instead, lawmakers approved \$23.8 million in teacher raises and a plan to boost the minimum teacher salary by 3 percent.

The vote was hailed as a victory for the Idaho Education Association, the teachers' union that had fought the measure. Union President Sherri Wood said her group offered to be at the table while Luna and other educational stakeholders hashed out the details of a new bill this year. "That actually has not happened," Wood said.

The proposed budget outlines Luna's priorities, but details, including the pay-for-performance plan, are still being worked out.

"It's not written in stone," Luna said, "but it's not written in jelly."

Department spokeswoman Melissa McGrath said Luna consulted the union last year when developing his previous pay-for-performance plan. Interested parties, including teachers, will be included in completing the details of the new proposal, she said.

Wood was part of a task force Luna formed this summer to help develop statewide standards for teacher performance. The lack of such standards was a reason why the Senate killed the previous pay-for-performance plan, according to the state Department of Education.

Lawmakers agreed to spend \$50,000 to develop a statewide teacher evaluation.

The task force is scheduled to finish its work in December, but Wood said the teacher evaluation plan should stay separate from the pay-for-performance plan when the Legislature considers both proposals next year.

"They're distinctly different animals," Wood said.

Teacher evaluations, which now vary across the state, should be used to help teachers grow professionally, pinpointing their weaknesses and areas where they can improve, Wood said.

The grading system shouldn't be used to determine whether teachers are "good" or "bad" and whether they should be paid accordingly, she said.

## **Lewiston, Clarkston students adjust to new class schedules**

By Kerri Sandaine

Thursday, September 4, 2008

Lewiston High School has switched to an eight-class schedule this fall, and Clarkston is back to a straight six.

As the second week of school wraps up, administrators at both schools said students and teachers are adjusting to the changes, and they haven't heard many complaints.

"We're just getting into the swing of it," Lewiston Principal Bob Donaldson said. "So far, everyone has been real positive, and there hasn't been a lot of grouching. I think the kids are feeling pretty good about it. Anything that's a little different is sometimes hard to get used to."

At Lewiston, a block schedule is in place and the 1,159 students in 10th through 12th grades have eight classes a semester and four meet each day on a rotating basis. Each class is 85 minutes long instead of 54 minutes.

Clarkston axed the modified-block schedule used at the high school last year and returned to six 54-minute classes per day. Classes now begin at the same time every day for about 800 students enrolled in grades nine through 12.

The new fall schedule had overwhelming support from the staff and seems to be going well, Principal Roger Trail said.

"We evaluated the schedule last spring using data from a survey that went out to students, parents and staff," he said. "We had several discussions and everybody had a voice. Ninety percent of our staff wanted to do a straight-six schedule, so this has been a positive move."

The modified block was a one-year, pilot program, Trail said. Having a different start time and some days with longer periods than others was confusing at times, especially for incoming freshmen trying to figure out where they need to be every day, he said.

"There were some valid reasons for having the other schedule, but I totally understand the reasoning behind why we went back," Trail said.

Donaldson said the block schedule is different than a modified block because each day has four periods and the same start time.

The longer periods, which were endorsed by 87 percent of the staff, allow for more in-depth instruction with less interruptions and distractions, he said. Students will earn 16 credits per year instead of 12.

"We were able to add 51 new classes this year, everything from welding to the history of rock and roll," Donaldson said. "That's been pretty fun for the students. They can now take things they couldn't in the old schedule."

Lewiston students said they are still getting used to the switch. Some said their classes seem long, while others said the four-period day is an improvement.

"I think it's good," said Perdeep Gill, a 16-year-old junior. "It gives you extra time to get your homework done."

Senior Haylee Moses, 17, said it's going OK, except for a social aspect. "I have the opposite lunch as my friends and that's hard."

#### FROM THE IDAHO-PRESS TRIBUNE, NAMPA

#### **Dozen vie for CWI board**

EDUCATION: Canyon County could end up without representation because all positions are at-large

By Mike Butts  
mbutts@idahopress.com

NAMPA — Four of the 12 candidates running for the College of Western Idaho's first elected board live in Canyon County. But depending on the outcome of the election, the board could end up without any Canyon County members.

All five board seats are at-large. One contested seat has no candidates from Canyon County and the other two contested seats both have candidates from Ada County.

Nampa businessman Jerry Hess, the board chairman and one of the college's original board members appointed last year, said he had not thought of the idea of having board seats designated for particular areas.

"(This) is the first time the question's been posed," Hess said.

Joining Nampa businesswoman M.C. Niland running for seats on the board are Nampa research and development analyst Tammy Ray, Nampa retired sociology professor Martin Scheffer and Caldwell attorney Jim Rice. State officials appointed Niland to the college's inaugural board last year.

State Sen. Stan Bastian, R-Eagle, running for Seat 1, formerly served as a high school vice principal and professional-technical coordinator for the Nampa School District.

The deadline for announcing candidacy for the five-member board was Tuesday. The election will be Nov. 4 as part of the general election.

CWI will begin offering classes at its Nampa campus in January.

Scheffer, 70, taught at Boise State University when it was a junior college in the 1960s and stayed at Boise State until 1997. Rice has made two unsuccessful runs for county commissioner as a Republican.

Ray has a master's degree in education and worked with the Idaho Department of Education for six years.

Who's running

Here are the candidates for the College of Western Idaho board.

Seat 1:

Stan Bastian, Eagle; Daniel Dunham, Boise; Bruce Wong, Boise; Stephen Woychick, Boise

Seat 2:

Gordon Browning, Meridian; Tammy Ray, Nampa; Jim Rice, Caldwell; Martin Scheffer, Nampa

Seat 3:

M.C. Niland, Nampa; Charles Story, Boise

Seat 4:

Mark Dunham, Boise

Seat 5:

Guy Hurlbutt, Boise

Hess announced he would not seek election to the board. So did original board member Hatch Barrett of Boise.

Mark Dunham and Guy Hurlbutt, both of Boise, are two board members who are seeking election to the board. They will run unopposed.

### **Public schools chief requests \$1.5 billion**

BOISE (AP) — The state Department of Education plans to ask Idaho lawmakers in January for \$1.5 billion to operate and enhance public schools in 2009 and 2010.

Public schools superintendent Tom Luna released his yearly budget proposal on Tuesday.

The \$1.5 billion Luna will request in 2009 is about 5 percent more than the \$1.46 billion he requested in January 2008.

### **Nampa school gets welcome grant**

Teachers say computer program funded by \$20,000 award helps students who fall behind catch up with peers

NAMPA — Central Elementary Principal Cindy Thomas cried when she received grant money to purchase educational software.

“It was a check for \$20,000, made out to the school,” she said.

### **FROM THE IDAHO STATESMAN**

**No education news stories posted online today.**

## FROM THE TWIN FALLS TIMES-NEWS

### **ID public schools budget could face opposition**

By JESSIE L. BONNER

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The proposed merit-based pay system is similar to a measure Idaho lawmakers voted to kill in February.

"I don't pretend to think that there's not going to be opposition," Luna said.

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The new budget covers everything from teacher salaries and efforts to boost student test scores in reading, to classroom supplies and a program to let high school juniors and seniors earn college credits.

Most of the \$27 million for teacher raises is designated for an \$18 million pay-for-performance plan. Since at least the early 1980s, Republican lawmakers have sought to break up the existing compensation system, based on classroom experience, arguing that it rewards good teachers the same as the bad.

Earlier this year, however, the Legislature voted to dump a \$21 million version of Luna's pay-for-performance plan, in part because bonuses would have been based largely on how students perform on statewide tests. Instead, lawmakers approved \$23.8 million in teacher raises and a plan to boost the minimum teacher salary by 3 percent.

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The proposed budget outlines Luna's priorities, but details, including the pay-for-performance plan, are still being worked out.

"It's not written in stone," Luna said, "but it's not written in jelly."

Department spokeswoman Melissa McGrath said Luna consulted the union last year when developing his previous pay-for-performance plan. Interested parties, including teachers, will be included in completing the details of the new proposal, she said.

Wood was part of a task force Luna formed this summer to help develop statewide standards for teacher performance. The lack of such standards was a reason why the Senate killed the previous pay-for-performance plan, according to the state Department of Education.

Lawmakers agreed to spend \$50,000 to develop a statewide teacher evaluation.

The task force is scheduled to finish its work in December, but Wood said the teacher evaluation plan should stay separate from the pay-for-performance plan when the Legislature considers both proposals next year.

"They're distinctly different animals," Wood said.

Teacher evaluations, which now vary across the state, should be used to help teachers grow professionally, pinpointing their weaknesses and areas where they can improve, Wood said.

The grading system shouldn't be used to determine whether teachers are "good" or "bad" and whether they should be paid accordingly, she said.

#### FROM THE IDAHO STATE JOURNAL (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

##### **Schools budget sparks debate**

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## **ISU loses nuclear engineers**

POCATELLO — Richard Jacobsen, the dean of Idaho State University's College of Engineering, said the university has slowly been losing faculty both to private industry and larger universities due to the continued growth in jobs in the nuclear energy field.

"Salaries for people graduating in nuclear engineering are extremely high right now," Jacobsen said. "Some of the students who graduate get hiring bonuses and fantastically good salaries."

Jacobsen said his department has felt the effects of the trend in recent months.

Thomas Hartmann and Patricia Paviet-Hartmann, both Idaho Falls-based research associate professors, left ISU's College of Engineering midway through the summer. Paviet-Hartmann did research with scientists at the Idaho National Laboratory and is now part of faculty at the University of Nevada Las Vegas.

Jacobsen said assistant professor Jianwei Chen also left the nuclear engineering program midway through the summer to take a position in the private nuclear energy industry.

However, given the salaries and the demand, Jacobsen said the faculty departures have not surprised him.

"Nuclear engineering department faculty are leaving all over the country. Good offers are going to be made," he said. "We were hoping those people would stay."

### **Luna submits \$1.5 billion school budget**

POCATELLO — Although generally supportive of increasing teacher salaries, District 25 Superintendent Mary Vagner said she won't fully back a proposal to allocate \$1.5 billion to operate and enhance public schools in 2009-2010 until she sees all of the details.

Public Schools Superintendent Tom Luna released his annual budget proposal Tuesday, and the latest request was about 5 percent more than the one he made last January.

Additionally, Luna earmarked \$27 million in his budget for teacher salary raises and a pay-for-performance plan that is similar to the proposal that died in the last legislative session.

"Well, I don't know what the content of his plan is. Obviously, our school district has been pretty vocal about putting an increase to teacher salaries," Vagner said. "So I would have to see what the proposal includes. He had had some stipulations in his proposal last year, and some in the district could not agree with them."

When Luna introduced a prior teacher pay plan during the 2008 legislative session, the bill promised teacher pay increases and a pay-for-performance bonus. However, teachers would only have received the perks if they agreed to give up their contracts.

Rep. Donna Boe, D-Pocatello, is part of the legislative committee that jointly introduced the bill onto the floor.

Boe said she is definitely supportive of increasing teacher pay, but contended that she would not back Luna's budget proposal if it included the same clauses as his last plan.

"You're asking teachers to give up their security and to leap into this unknown situation with all the hope that they would be able to increase their salaries," she said. "How do you measure that?"

FROM THE IDAHO FALLS POST REGISTER (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

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